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***Reference by Andy Bannister (Pathway Leader in Fine Art Sculpture, City & Guilds of London Art School) in support of the application by Cata Ivancov for the Graduate Studio Award 07 at Lewisham Art House***

In this reference I will outline Cata Ivancov's abilities as an artist and the individual qualities that I believe make him an ideal candidate for the Graduate Studio Award 07 at Lewisham Art House.

I taught Cata while he was studying on the fine art sculpture pathway at City & Guilds of London Art School between 2012 and 2015. From the outset, I was impressed by his dedication to the development of his practical and creative skills and to the progression of his contextual understanding. During the first year, he produced a series of sculptural works that demonstrated an impressive level of technical ability and creative invention. As he progressed through the second year of the course he realised a series of highly poetic and resonant works which indicated a confident use of materials and processes and a deepening critical understanding. These pieces drew upon his experience of growing up in Romania in the period before the 1989 revolution and on his memories of both the rural and urban regions of his native country. They reflected a wider interest in the rise and fall of the Eastern Bloc and in the physical and architectural structures of both the communist past and capitalist present. He also sought to broaden his knowledge of historic and contemporary sculptural/installation practices and his understanding of its associated critical contexts.

During the third year of his studies he continued to explore this terrain with an increased focus on the role played by the museum in defining cultural meanings and values. The works he created for his final assessment were both technically sophisticated and conceptually ambitious, involving the confident and inventive use of a range of media. His final mark was in the first class banding category in recognition of his high levels of critical, practical and creative achievement in the theoretical and studio practice elements of the course.

In personal terms, I found Cata to be an engaging, highly intelligent and hardworking individual. He responded very positively to tutorial advice and guidance and in turn made a strong contribution to the 'culture' of the fine art course at City & Guilds. He was highly generous towards (and supportive of) his fellow students in group learning situations, and made a much-valued contribution to the fine art course as a student representative during the first and second years of his studies.

These qualities and achievements, coupled with a strong desire to further develop his practice and to pursue a career as a visual artist make him an ideal candidate for the studio award for which he is applying. I am of the view that he would benefit greatly from the opportunities that the award offers- a dedicated space and an extended period of time in which to develop one's practice and the

opportunity to work as part of a creative community. I believe that he would thrive in such an environment and that he would in turn make a valuable contribution to this community. I strongly support his application and can see no reason why he would not give a good account of himself, his work and his reasons for applying for the studio award.

Yours faithfully,

**Andy Bannister**